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THE

MONTHLY

GULL

BULLETIN

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Volume 55

Berkeley, California

September 1973

Number 9

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### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The first general membership meeting of the Golden Gate Audubon Society will be held Thursday, September 13, 7:30 P.M. at the Hall of Flowers in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco. The program will feature GGAS's Ray Higgs, who will show his outstanding slides. He will concentrate on ducks, geese and other migratory birds, whetting our enthusiasm for the coming winter season. Those members who had the good fortune to see his show last year can look forward to seeing many new slides.

DOLORES WHITE, *Program Chairperson*

### WILDLIFE FILMS BEGIN OCTOBER FIRST

The first film in the 1973-1974 Audubon Wildlife Film series will be shown on October 1, at the Oakland Auditorium Theatre, 10th and Fallon streets, Oakland. Once again, the series will be co-sponsored by the Golden Gate Audubon Society and the Oakland Museum Association. Because of rising costs, the season tickets will be a dollar more this year — \$6.00 for members of GGAS or the Oakland Museum Association, \$7.00 for non-members.

If you wish to purchase a season ticket, send a check made out to the Oakland Museum Association along with a self-addressed stamped envelope to: Oakland Museum Association, 1000 Oak Street, Oakland 94607. Members will soon be receiving a brochure with full details.

The films are as follows: October 1 - Greg McMillan's "The Living Jungle"; October 29 - Walter H. Berlet's "West Side Story"; January 21 - Charles T. Hotchkiss's "Queen of the Cascades"; March 25 - John D. Frank Heiman's "What Have You Done with my Country?"; March 4 - Bulger's "Sweden, Mountains to the Sea".

—FRANCES E. FALLGATTER, *Wildlife Chairman*



Marlin W. Haley, Hayward (left) president of the EBRPD Board smiles broadly as he accepts the two \$100,000 checks from Mrs. Claire A. Johnson of Oakland, president of the Golden Gate Audubon Society and John R. May, Executive Director of the San Francisco Foundation.

### A HAPPY DAY FOR EVERYONE

On May 15, Claire Johnson, president of the Golden Gate Audubon Society, presented a check for \$100,000 to the East Bay Regional Park District to aid in the purchasing of Pt. Pinole as a regional park. Pt. Pinole was purchased in the fall of 1972 from the Bethlehem Steel Company for \$6,000,000.

Pt. Pinole Regional Park is an extraordinary piece of landscape, almost a 1,000 acres of shoreline, grassland and eucalyptus forest, that juts into the Bay near the town of San Pablo. It is located in a low income, partly industrialized area where a large park, close at hand, will be a new experience for many. For birders it is a paradise, with its saltwater and freshwater marshlands, its windy bluffs and its driftwood beaches. Richard Trudeau, General Manager of EBRPD calls it "the crown jewel" of the East Bay Park System.

GGAS can feel justly proud of helping to make the acquisition of this park a reality. As Claire Johnson said when making the presentation, "This is a happy day for you, a happy day for us and certainly a happy day for conservation". The \$100,000 came to us from the estate of Captain George Whittell, through the National Audubon Society. Claire Johnson wrote the first proposal seeking the funds in 1971.

Also presenting a \$100,000 check at the same occasion was John R. May, Executive Director of the San Francisco Foundation. As a result of these private gifts, the Park District qualified for an additional \$100,000 grant from the Max C. Fleischmann Foundation of Reno, Nevada.

When September brings fresh, bright days and migrant shorebirds, head for Pt. Pinole Regional Park with your binoculars, and check out the northernmost marsh, which will be named for Capt. Whittell. Enjoy the warm sun and the knowledge that GGAS helped preserve this unique and beautiful open space.—ED.

### COVEL'S CONSERVATION CORNER

"Sierra Club go home." "Let the b——s freeze in the dark." These were some of the bumper stickers that greeted us this summer in Alaska. Conversations among natives, overheard in coffee shops and lobbies, were sometimes as belligerent as the stickers.

The proposed Alaskan pipeline was the cause of it all, of course. We (the Covels as tourists) are among the majority of environmentalists who realize that this Alaskan oil must and will be taken out. We protested and questioned, however, the precipitous haste to pipe it to the coast at Valdez where it would be transported, by those fearsome supertankers of the future, to the California coast.

The Oil Lobby and the Alaska First crowd were confident over the eventual outcome of their "snow-job" of Congress and the Administration. Mountains of pipe sections are stacked and ready outside of Fairbanks. At this writing—July 23— it appears that Congress and the Administration, for once, think alike in their haste to get on with it.

I do not have the expertise to predict just what effect this metal monster will have on the delicate tundra and muskeg it will traverse. But I can repeat the concerns, expressed directly to me, of several knowledgeable Alaskan Park Service and wildlife personal and sportsmen. They fear that the smuggled firearms and loose supervision of the imported pipeline construction crews will take a heavy, illegal toll of migrating caribou and other big game. If this does happen, we concerned outsiders in the "Lower States" must meddle some more.

Assuming the "supertankers are coming" we must exert every effort, through appeal and pressure, to make certain that the planned offshore unloading installations will present the least destructive impact possible on fisheries, wildlife and on the scenic and recreational resources of the coast. It is also important to note that though there is some pressure, from major power governmental commissions and shipping interests, to require adequate compartments and double-bottoms in construction, the small "flag nations", who register so many commercial ships, are mostly indifferent toward these expensive safeguards against massive oil spills.

GGAS members who also belong to the Sierra Club must have been

properly jolted upon reading that nightmarish article in the June *Bulletin* "It Was Sad When the Great Ship Went Down." This was an account of the hypothetical wreck of a 225 million gallon supertanker off the Farallon Islands. If you don't receive the *Bulletin*, please borrow a copy and read this epic horror story.

What can you do to help avert such a disaster? Keep informed in the days ahead when the supertanker construction begins, the ships are being registered, and the offshore unloading facilities sites are being chosen. You will be briefed by many sources. Then let yourself be heard!

—PAUL COVEL, *Conservation Chairman*

### BAY AREA BIRDS

This issue of the *Gull* features new editors, and with them comes a new column, *Bay Area Birds*. This column will continue to print *Field Observations*, with a few policy changes mentioned below. In addition we will print short articles of interest to the birder. For instance, next month we will describe the field marks of the Thayer's Gull, not found in any field guide. Every month, we'll print suggestions for areas to bird during the month, sometimes describing step-by-step field trips.

#### *Birding for September*

September through November is the time to look for rare eastern vagrants, especially warblers. Last year, at least 21 species of vagrant warblers were seen in the area, including Worm-eating, Lucy's, Cape May, and Black-throated Green. Most reports come from near the coast, with Point Pinos in Montreay County the best spot. Also try Point Reyes, where "islands" of trees out on the relatively barren point act like magnets to the birds. The areas around the RCA Communications Company and the Mendoza Ranch are fine examples, but be sure to get permission before you enter private property. If you don't know where these places are, maps are available at the National Seashore headquarters. Even closer than Point Reyes is Rodeo Lagoon, reached through Fort Funston.

Also to be looked for during the month are unusual pelagic birds. Just look at our *Field Observations* to get the idea. Especially interesting is the Brown Booby, the first Northern California record. This spring there was an occurrence of a periodic failure, called *El Niño*, of the Humboldt Current off South America. The changes in water temperature altered the fish supply and caused massive breeding failures, and this is believed to have triggered post-breeding wanderings of these southern birds. It's possible that more Frigatebirds or Boobies could show up anywhere along the coast. And by all means try to get on a pelagic field trip. As of this writing, there are still openings on the GGAS trips, described elsewhere in the *Gull*.

Send all observations and all correspondence with this column to Bill Principe, *Bay Area Birds* editor, 301 Camino Pablo, Orinda 94563 (254-1071).



*Field Observations*

The sheer volume of observations received during the summer, the more interesting half of which are printed below, has convinced me that a policy must be set concerning what can and cannot be printed. After gaining some experience at editing this column, I plan to do just that, but in the meantime, certain goals stand out. This column should be entertaining, informative, and most of all, accurate.

Rare birds will not be published without verified details. This is important because much of our information will go on to such publications as *American Birds*, where accuracy is crucial.

At the same time, regular birds such as Western Tanagers and Hooded Orioles will probably not be published, unless the circumstances of the observation are unusual. These are dramatic birds, but we all enjoy seeing them in the flesh (in the feather?) more than in print. Still, all sightings are solicited, and will be compiled for *American Birds*.

**Yellow-billed Loon**, non-breeding, Princeton Harbor, June 17 (through at least June 24)—LCB, VR, BE, ST, SB, DR, AW.

*New Zealand Shearwater*, 3 from Pigeon Point, July 9—BE. (Rarely seen from shore).

**Red-billed Tropicbird**, Pescadero Marsh, June 29—M&RH. ER (Second N. Cal. record).

*White Pelican*, 12 over Emeryville mudflats, July 29—V&GH.

**Brown Booby**, adult, South Beach, Pt. Reyes, July 14—L&FN (First N. Cal. record).

**Magnificent Frigatebird**, imm. over Bodega Bay or at South Beach, Pt. Reyes, July 31 through at least Aug. 5—WMP, AM, ER, MLR, PA, V&GH, many others; also at least three birds in Southern California.

*Roseate Spoonbill*, probably 50 to 100 birds in Southern California, including 2 as far north as Goleta, through June and July.

*Fulvous Tree Duck*, 2 in Woodland Sugar Ponds, Yolo Co., July 1—VR, J&SL.

*Blue-winged Teal*, male in Woodland Sugar Ponds, July 1—VR, J&SL.

*Wood Duck*, female with 4 chicks in Pescadero Marsh, June 17—LCB, VR, AW.

Several summering *Harlequin Ducks* and *Black Scoters* along the coast, through June and July.

*Goshawk*, near Yuba Pass, June 16—WMP, FF, AM, MZ.

*Swainson's Hawk*, Woodland, June 29 and July 1—VR, J&SL; 2 at Woodland, July 14—LCB, DE, JM, VR; 4 along highway I-5, San Joaquin Co., July 23—LCB, VR.

*Turkey*, 15 on private ranch near Gilroy, July 11—BE, BP, VR (introduced here in 1935).

*White-tailed Ptarmigan*, Soldier Lake, Yosemite, July 16—RP, RT (introduced here in 1972 and 1973, not yet established).

*Wandering Tattler*, 2, Castro Point, Richmond, July 2—BP.

*Pectoral Sandpiper*, Point Reyes, July 26—WMP.

*Baird's Sandpiper*, 2 Alameda South Shore, July 27—MH, ER; 2, Pescadero Marsh, Aug. 7—BF, JM, *et. al.*

*Wilson's Phalarope*, 10,000+, Dumbarton Bridge, July 6—DE, JM, BP, VR, CW.

*Pomarine Jaeger*, Moss Beach, June 17—SB.

*Skua*, on a Santa Cruz pelagic field trip, June 11—SB, BE, WMP, *et. al.*

*Arctic Tern*, 2, Bay Bridge Toll Plaza, Aug. 5—S&KB, JM, DB, S&LT, BT, DR, VR, J&SL, BP.

*Least Tern*, Bay Bridge Toll Plaza, May 30—VH.

*Elegant Tern*, as many as 150 at Bay Bridge Toll Plaza, after late July.

*Common Murre*, San Leandro Bay, July 27—MH, ER.

*Ancient Murrelet*, in fall plumage, Bodega Bay, Aug. 5—S&KB, JM, DB, S&LT, BT, DR, VR, J&SL, BP.

**Horned Puffin**, off Farallon, June 10—GB; off Eureka in July—RLeV; also reported from as far south as San Diego this summer.

*Yellow-billed Cuckoo*, 3 near Glenn, Glenn Co., July 8—DE, DAG, JM, BP, VR, CW; Clear Lake, Lake Co., in July—BE.

*Spotted Owl*, hooting at Crane Flat, Yosemite, June 25—DE, JM, VR, CW.

*Pileated Woodpecker*, Lower Dell Trail, Mt. Tam., July 12—WMP, AM, SSW.

*Cassin's Kingbird*, 2 on Mines Rd., near Livermore, June 7—VR.

*Albino American Robin*, Albany, June 18—JLb.

*Chestnut-sided Warbler*, male at Clear Lake in July—BE.

*Bobolink*, male, Año Nuevo, July 14—ST.

*Rose-breasted Grosbeak*, 2 males, 2 females, 1 imm. in group on mulberry bush, near Sebastopol, July 29 through Aug. 1—L&BL.

*Evening Grosbeak*, 2 males, Berkeley hills, June 12, 13—J&PT.

*Red Crossbill*, at Baker Beach, San Francisco, June 1—JP.

*Grasshopper Sparrow* colony in Wildcat Canyon, May through July—seen by many.

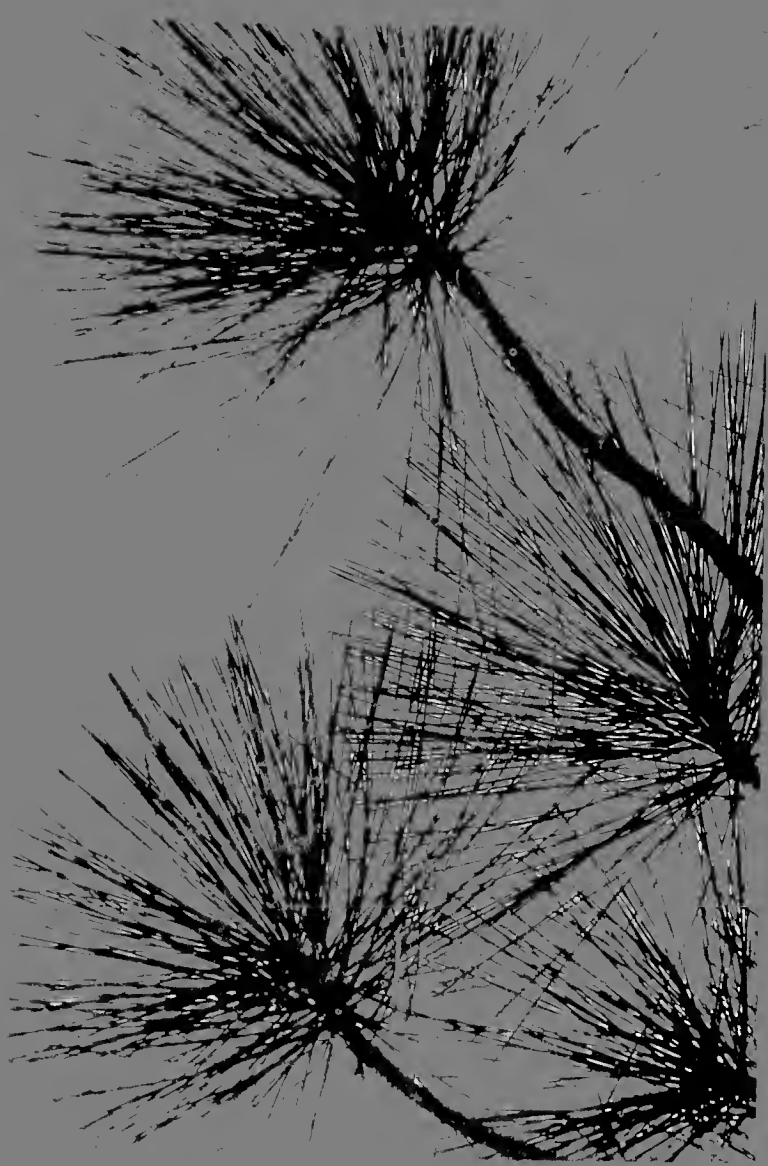
*Observers:* Peter Allen, Steve & Karen Bailey, Laurence C. Binford, Bruce Elliott, Dick Erickson, Florence Fischer, Bud Fry, David A. Gaines, Margaret & Ralph Hilton, Vi & George Homem, Lewis & Betty Land, Ron LeValley, Jim Lieb, John & Susan Luther, Alice Mericourt, Joe Morlan, Leroy & Fran Nelson, Robert Peterson, Joann Pettinicchio, Bill Principe, William M. Pursell, Van Remsen, Elsie Roemer, Mary Louise Rosegay, Scott & Laurie Terrill, Richard Timmins, Bill Tweit, John & Polly Thomas, Chris Wilson, Andy Winokur, S. S. Whitehead, Margaret Zeff.

—BILL PRINCIPE, *Asst. Editor* (254-1071)

### THE SHORT-TAILED ALBATROSS: AN OBITUARY

The last issue of the *Gull* featured a sprightly article about the adventures of a Short-tailed Albatross who found its way to San Francisco via a Greek freighter.

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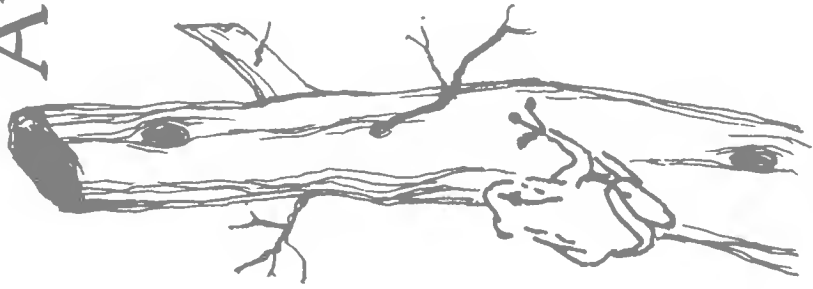
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# AUDUBON NATURE TRAINING<sup>\*</sup>.....

over the past decade has introduced thousands to the wonders of nature that exist even within the confines of a metropolitan area. The beauty is there.... the wonder is there.... They are just a little harder to find. But the adventure of the search for nature's secrets make Audubon Nature Training an exciting as well as a pleasurable experience. ANT's approach is that the joys of nature are for everyone. Together a class explores a backyard, schoolyard, city park, vacant lot, to find out what nature is doing. ANT's "discovery" teaching approach stimulates



awareness, curiosity, questioning, and the appreciation of nature – thus giving students the desire, the ability, and the pleasure of thinking ecologically.

The results of ANI are especially for children! For each adult who experiences ANI's program, it has been shown that at least four or five children are at some time the recipients of that new-found knowledge. In this way many children are acquiring an awareness and appreciation of some of the seemingly magic facets of our natural world... their world to be protected and loved for the children of tomorrow.

Come join ANI for your enjoyment and to share with others.



Unfortunately, not all stories have a happy ending. After a brief stay at the San Francisco Zoo, where it received excellent care, it was taken to Travis Air Force Base to begin the long trek back across the Pacific. Problems arose over travel arrangements, however, and it was decided to return the albatross to the zoo. It died enroute, on June 3, far from its home near the Bonin Islands in the Western Pacific.

Probable cause of death: strangulation by red tape.—ED

### SEPTEMBER FIELD TRIPS

**Saturday, September 8:** **Golden Gate Park.** Come and see the hummingbirds in the Fuchsia Gardens and the Arboretum. Meet at the intersection of Stanyon and Hayes at the entrance to the Fuchsia Gardens at **8 A.M.** Lunch is optional. Leader: Roberta Long (564-7767).

**Sunday, September 16:** Come to **Coyote Hills Regional Park**, north of the Dumbarton Bridge. From the Nimitz Freeway, take the Jarvis Ave. exit. Drive west on Jarvis to Newark Blvd. (first signal). Turn right, and after about a mile, turn left on Patterson Road. Meet in the big parking lot at **9 A.M.** We should see Burrowing Owls, Great Horned Owls, and shorebirds. Leader: Peter Allen (781-0148).

**Wednesday, September 19:** Again it's **Coyote Hills**. Directions are above. Leader: Virginia Sherwood (841-2161).

**Sunday, September 30:** Join us at **Fort Cronkhite**. Cross the Golden Gate Bridge, exit at Alexander Ave. just north of the bridge. Drive for about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile and turn left. Go through the tunnel and wait in the parking lot at the other end. Meet at **8 A.M.** Bring lunch. Leader: Aubrey Burns (453-6290).

Don't forget the no-leader trips. On **Thursday, September 13**, meet at the Little Farm in **Tilden Park**. On **Wednesday, September 26**, meet in front of the Academy of Sciences in **Golden Gate Park**. Both trips meet at **9 A.M.** and both trips choose their own leaders.

Dates to hold: **October 13-14** in **Caswell State Park** near Mantea.

—PAT TRIGGS, *Field Trips Chairman*

### TWO GGAS PELAGIC TRIPS

On **Saturday, September 22**, and **Sunday, October 7**, the Golden Gate Audubon Society will sponsor boat trips for those interested in viewing and studying migrating sea birds. Boat trips are scheduled to leave from Fisherman's Wharf in Monterey at **9 A.M.** and return between **2** and **3 P.M.** Fare will be \$10 per person. Please send your check (payable to Golden Gate Audubon) along with a self-addressed envelope (stamped) to Golden Gate Audubon, Boat Trip, P.O. Box 5022, Berkeley 94705. Names and addresses of guests must be included along with your payment. Details on where to meet will be sent to you along with acknowledgment of payment. Reservations will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis and will close when the boats are filled.

### FIELD TRIPS REPORT

Fifty birdwatchers found 105 species of birds in the Yuba Pass region on June 16 and 17. Up on the Pass, everybody had excellent views of the Black-backed Three-toed Woodpeckers at their nest. Nesting Pileated Woodpeckers were also found. Down in the valley, we found the Sage Grouse, Sage Thrasher, and Common Nighthawk. In a marsh we found the Black Tern, and under a bridge we found a Dipper nest with three young. We sorely missed Beth Snyder who introduced us to this productive area some twenty years ago, and we wish her a speedy recovery from her accident on a birding trip in Mexico.

Also in June, thirteen birders turned up for a five-mile, early morning hike in Marin County. We found a total of 38 species, including the Black-throated Grey Warbler, which is almost always found on Pine Point during the summer, and the White-tailed Kite, which is a new bird for this area. A Pileated Woodpecker also showed up for us and was a life bird for most of us.

About 25 people attended the Echo Lake trip on July 14 and 15. We found 59 species, and among them were seven species of woodpeckers, including the Pileated and Black-backed Three-toed. We found five species of warblers, including Nashville and MacGillivray's. We also saw a Pygmy Nuthatch, Solitary Vireo, Evening Grosbeak, Red Crossbill, and a pair of Mountain Bluebirds feeding their young on the nest. Rufous Hummingbirds were in abundance and Fox Sparrows sang all weekend. The only bird that failed to show was the Blue Grouse. A surprise visitor was a very large Porcupine on Benwood Meadow.

—PAT TRIGGS, *Field Trips Chairman*

### FIELD TRIP ETIQUETTE

SINCE GGAS FIELD TRIPS are becoming more popular than ever, it seems appropriate at this time to mention briefly a few guidelines for conduct in the field that will result in more birds and less problems for all field trip participants. These suggestions are taken in part from the June issue of the bulletin of the Portland Audubon Society, but they apply to all chapters and field trips.

1. Be on time or, where possible, make arrangements with the leader if you wish to join the group after the scheduled rendezvous. On some trips, tardiness could mean missing out, but in any case, leaders seldom are obliged to wait longer than ten minutes.

2. Keep in sight of the group or inform the leader if you do not. This is especially important in really wild areas where separation from the group could mean getting lost. When in a caravan, follow the car in front and be sure the car behind can follow you. If you have to drop out of a caravan, inform the car behind you so they can later tell the leader of your departure.

3. Be as quiet as possible in the field. Do not wear bright colors—red, orange, yellow or white.

- 4. Do not bring pets unless you plan to keep them locked in your car.
  - 5. Leave all gates as you found them.
  - 6. Collect no plants, rocks or other specimens in protected areas.
- In fragile areas, stay on trails and roadways. Leave an area as you found it.

**FROM YOUR PRESIDENT'S STOCKPILE**

**GGAS SPLIT:** A tabulation of the returns to the questionnaire, requested by Mary Louise Rosegay, concerning a split of the Golden Gate Audubon Society into East Bay and San Francisco branches brought responses from less than 1.2% of the membership. Twenty-six letters, representing 31 individuals supported a split, the San Francisco contingent favoring it five to one. In the event of a split, 17 San Franciscans volunteered their services, almost entirely in the categories of hearings, newsletter, and office work. Because of the sparsity of the returns and the absence of a nucleus of members anxious to undertake the organization of a new branch, the matter will be held in abeyance. We will be contacting those who showed a willingness to attend hearings. We have some ideas as to how complaints related to our size and geographical spread can be minimized. These will be presented at the Sept. General Meeting in San Francisco.

**CHRISTMAS COUNT:** The GGAS count is scheduled for Sunday, Dec. 16 (the day following the Point Reyes count), according to compiler Van Remsen. Van, a graduate student in Ornithology at U.C. Berkeley, will be assisted by Scott Terrill.

**REPRESENTATIVES NEEDED:** We are deluged with requests to send representatives to hearings or to conferences, to evaluate environmental impact studies, to serve as watchdogs on areas threatened by developers, to back up other conservation groups on specific issues for which they are fighting. We need experts, as well as intelligent, articulate members to screen this material, to help us determine the position to take on given issues, and to provide manpower to meet these requests. If you can volunteer, will you fill in and return this form?

—G. R. MACHLIS, *President*

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I prefer an assignment in the East Bay ☐, in San Francisco ☐. I am available daytime ☐, evenings ☐. I am especially interested in matters affecting: ocean, coastline, bay ☐; parkland and other open space ☐; highways, transportation, urban problems ☐; wildlife ☐; provision of energy ☐ other .....

I would consider chairing a committee on the environment ☐. I would serve as a member of such a committee ☐.

Name..... Address.....

Tel..... Mail to GGAS Hearings, Box 5022, Berkeley 94705.





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Established January 25, 1917 A Branch of the National Audubon Society since 1948

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Send address changes to Membership Secretary promptly; Post Office does not forward the *GULL*. Monthly meetings—second Thursday 7:30 P.M. Joint membership—local and national \$12 per year (individual); \$15 (family); includes AUDUBON MAGAZINE and the *GULL*; to join, make check payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving the *GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to the *GULL* separately \$2 per year. High school and college student membership \$6 per year.

The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month.